

Chapter 7. A place called Tasmania

That each of us should be drawn to particular pieces of territory, for reasons we take to be relatively uncomplicated, is radically acceptable. A sense of place, everyone presumes, is everyone's possession. But sense of place is not possessed by everyone in a similar manner or like configuration, and that pervasive fact is what makes it interesting ... Sense of place is inseparable from the ideas that inform it.

(Basso 1996:84)

7.1 Introduction

Place construction is very important as it helps us understand how people experience and make sense of their lives in a particular place and how they make sense of their movements between places. As noted in the previous chapter, place constructions can even influence people's identities. Furthermore, as noted in Chapter Five, people's sense of place affects not only their identities and experiences, but also their actions and the actions of others, which in turn influence the politics and economy of a place.

In most, if not all cases, a number of competing constructions of a place exist at any one time. As Appadurai (1998:20) notes, "the problem of place and voice is ultimately a problem of power". Massey (1995:134) explains that there can be "rival claims to define the meanings of places and, thereby, rights to control their use in the future". For example, some people may argue for bounded notions of particular place, while others see that place as a node in networks of relations. During the course of this research, I came across multiple constructions of Tasmania as a place,⁷⁸

⁷⁸ Again, when I speak of constructions of Tasmania as a place I am referring to both constructions of places that are understood to be located within the state and constructions of the state of Tasmania itself as a significant place.

both between the discourses of different actors, but also within individuals' own discourses about place.

In this Chapter, I examine these various, and at times competing, constructions of Tasmania as a place, focusing upon the constructions of the young Tasmanians I spoke with. I then explore the possible implications of such constructions before going on to discuss the potential influence of competing and dominant discourses (i.e. those of the State Government and commercial actors) on the experiences and actions of young returned Tasmanians. These constructions of Tasmania as a place are juxtaposed with my discussions on the constructions of the out-migrations of young people from Tasmania as a problem, as discussed in Chapter One.

7.2 Constructions of Tasmania

Place constructions, or discourses about a place, are particularly important because such discourses offer ways of understanding the world, and the way people understand the world influences the way they act in relation to the world. In other words, these discourses can have real effects because they influence the way people act. The following comment in a letter to the editor in *The Mercury* (Crawford 1999:18) makes this point in relation to the case at hand:

Perceptions are important. The young leave Tasmania – many never to return – because they perceive that the state is too small, perhaps too backward, for them to make a go of it.

Place constructions influence migration decisions and experiences and this was reflected throughout the interviews and focus groups. I came across numerous constructions of Tasmania as a place and people commented on the implications of these understandings of Tasmania for their own migration decisions and experiences. For the purposes of analysis, I have chosen to divide these constructions into two main categories: bounded and networked constructions of place. Both types of place construction were evident throughout the research process. On the one hand, people spoke about Tasmania as an ‘isolated’ and ‘insular’ place and, on the other hand, as a place with strong social, economic and political ties beyond its borders. In many cases, the same people utilized both constructions simultaneously.

As noted in Chapter Four, discourses of isolation and insularity were evident in the interviews. Despite this, while many people talked about Tasmania as ‘isolated’ or ‘remote’, nobody explicitly described Tasmania as ‘networked’. However, networked aspects of place construction were recognized by the people I spoke to and were implicit in their comments. For example, the idea that there is a ‘culture of migration’ in Tasmania is premised upon networked notions of place:

Ben: I think it's pretty much taken for granted amongst my friends that people come and go.

The possibility for networked constructions of Tasmania was also recognized in the sense that even bounded constructions of a place are made in relation to other places. They are premised on the existence of networks, that is, they are based upon Tasmania being seen simultaneously as a 'node in networks of social relations'. Tasmania is understood as isolated and remote *in comparison with* other places, the existence of which is known about because of the existence of networks⁷⁹. For example:

Ben: So I guess that's another reason, Tasmania's very remote. I wanted to be sort of closer to where things were happening, um, you know, not just for job reasons, but to see what it was like in a bigger place.

The above quote from Ben also brings to light the importance of discourses of 'opportunities elsewhere' and/or positive constructions of other places, which also influence migration decisions and experiences. Hence, in researching place construction in relation to migration, it is important to recognize the significance of constructions of the places of arrival and departure, but also the constructions of all the other places that are thought about in relation to migration. Such a study is beyond the scope of this research, but the importance of comparative place constructions should be recognized.

Furthermore, for many of the people I spoke to, the experience of leaving and then returning to Tasmania led to a renewed sense of Tasmania as a place:

⁷⁹ I do not mean to imply that the construction of a bounded place necessarily requires the concept of other *specific* networked places. The construction of a bounded place only requires the general concept of 'the other place', not a specific networked other place. This can be seen in generalized comments about other places, such as the "big city" (David) or "this big fabulous world out there" (Ellie).

Steve: But I think that sense of knowing this place better often helps when you've, when you've actually experienced other things and there's an issue of comparison or an issue of relativity, you know, that's why I think Hobart was such a blow out for us when we got back.

In some cases, this meant people had more appreciation for the lifestyle and natural environment of Tasmania upon return. In other cases this meant a greater realization of the insularity of Tasmanian society upon return. These renewed senses of place are reliant upon networked notions of place, and imply that mobility is an important part of place construction for people.

7.3 Implications

The ways in which places are constructed is of more than theoretical importance. Constructions influence the actions and experiences of all those people who have some connection to that place: whether they have lived there, do business there or dream of holidaying there. People act on their understandings of the nature of a place, that is, upon their constructions of a place. For example, in the case of migration, people act on their beliefs (or constructions) about the opportunities available or constraints posed by a particular place. For example, James explained that he moved to Canberra because he assumed that there were no jobs available in Tasmania:

James: I just assumed that I'd have to leave so I left, um, but I don't know if I would have got a job here if I hadn't left or not.

However, he did not actually look for jobs in the state. Just as is the case with all social constructions, constructions of place are certainly not isolated from material realities. James based his assumption on his knowledge of the high unemployment rate in the state. However, it was the construction, and not the 'reality' of unemployment that was the most immediate reason given by James for leaving. In short, constructions of Tasmania as a place can influence people's decisions to migrate and their experiences of migrating. Furthermore, just as current and former migration decisions and experiences have been influenced by constructions of Tasmania and other places, decisions about the future and plans for future moves rely heavily upon constructions of Tasmania and other places and what these places may have to offer in the coming years. I will now discuss some of the implications of bounded and networked constructions of Tasmania that arose as issues during the course of the interviews and focus groups.

7.3.1 Bounded constructions

To a large extent, bounded constructions of Tasmania are influenced by the fact that Tasmania is an island, geographically separated from 'the mainland'. This 'island status' has some very real direct consequences for the state's economy and people. However, it also has some equally real yet indirect consequences as a result of discourses surrounding 'island life'. Bounded notions of Tasmania had both positive and negative implications for the people I spoke to. In being seen as bounded, Tasmania was understood as both a prison and a paradise.

In many cases, the construction of Tasmania as a bounded place was related to feelings of isolation that encouraged people to leave the state:

Sophia: You'd want to broaden your horizons and go somewhere else ... you just get stuck in a rut in Tassie I think and you feel isolated being stuck on an island away from [any]where.

As well as isolation, the insularity of thinking in the state was also discussed by a number of informants. People spoke about the insularity of employers' approaches to hiring new employees (discussed in Chapter Four):

Kate: I remember going to one of those stupid job search places and even the guy in the office said to me 'look, there's pretty much nothing we can do for you. In Hobart, if you want a job, you've got to network'.

They spoke about people being uninterested in their experiences of travelling elsewhere, which some people tied to insularity in thinking:

Steve: The hardest thing was that people really didn't understand where we were coming from. I think they just misunderstood the sense of freedom, or maybe even, they just weren't interested in

our lives, or, not that we expected people to go 'tell us about your life' ... there just seemed to be this ignorance or something, or a shallowness to their enquiry, it was almost like tokenism I suppose.

They spoke about insularity in the thinking of representatives of the State Government:

Elizabeth: Tassie seems to be really stuck in having things status quo, whereas I think if you've seen how things can be and if they're done well then you can go, well, no, this has happened and bringing all that sort of life experience stuff back is a good thing, because it's what Tassie needs ... I think we're getting better at it, but I think our politicians, I mean when you keep putting footballers in I think you've got a problem⁸⁰ [laughter]. So there's this whole, there's all sorts of problems that Tassie has. I mean there are great things about being an island but I think being an island makes you quite insular and closed to other ideas.

They spoke about such insularity being reflected in the state's media:

James: I think I saw it [Tasmania] as being fairly narrow minded in a lot of ways [upon my return]. Um, how much of that is actually Tasmania and how much of that is Tasmanian media I also don't know, um, but I found a lot of things um pretty frustrating in terms of the, almost an attitude that says 'you can't do anything' before you try. You know, someone wants to build something, or change something and almost, it really struck me

⁸⁰ This was most probably a reference to Robert (Bob) Cheek, the opposition leader (Liberal) from 2001 to 2002, who was a former Australian Rules footballer.

that almost the immediate reaction was 'you can't do it', without stopping to look at it.

Interestingly, the issue of insularity appears to have become more pronounced upon returning to the state for the people I spoke to. Before they left, many people saw Tasmania as physically isolated, but many more saw Tasmania as socially insular upon their return, as they could now compare their experiences of returning with the experiences they had had elsewhere.

Perceptions of the physical isolation of the state along with concerns about the insularity of thinking by major employers, government representatives, the media, and even friends in the state had all had negative impacts on some of the young people I spoke with. These perceptions impacted upon their decisions to move away from the state initially, their experiences of returning to the state and also upon their plans for future moves.

A further issue related to bounded constructions of Tasmania is what might be called an 'inferiority complex' of people in Tasmania with respect to 'the mainland'. While this was certainly not universal among all informants, some people spoke about wanting to move away to experience somewhere bigger and better; somewhere with more opportunities. People may be pressured to move because of this perceived better 'other' place. Kate explained in a focus group that she grew up feeling like she was missing out on something and that if she had grown up in Sydney or Melbourne, with more access to things like galleries and theme parks, she may not have felt that way.

While in many cases, this may be seen as simply a desire for difference (rather than betterment), the 'inferiority complex' can perhaps be best observed from the point of view of return migrants being seen as 'failures':

Kate: I remember one of my friends just saying 'how are you coping being in Hobart? Are you OK with it?' and it was almost

like everyone had just thought because I was the only one who'd come back and stayed that I was ... a bit of a loser, I hadn't quite achieved as much as they did, like they'd made it in the big world and I didn't.

While in many cases, bounded constructions of Tasmania could have negative consequences, in other cases the bounded nature of Tasmania was seen to have benefits, and constructions of Tasmania as bounded and isolated actually encouraged some people to return to, and/or to remain living in a place seen to have a more pleasing environment with stronger and more closely-knit social networks:

Kate: All the things I had I just took for granted and assumed you had that anywhere, you know, like the sense of community here, I had no idea how great it is until I went somewhere that doesn't have that ... I really appreciate the things that Hobart has to offer ... [I] didn't really realize how picturesque it was because I'd just seen so much bush and everything since a young age I just thought everyone's got nice bushwalking areas, everyone's got clean air.

Such positive constructions could also impact upon people's decisions to return to the state, their experiences of retuning and their plans for future moves. Again, the importance of both physical and social aspects to the experiences of migration is evident here. Just as bounded notions of place were related to both physical isolation and social insularity, they could also be related to a unique physical environment and social networks.

7.3.2 Networked constructions

While some people spoke about Tasmania in terms of bounded constructions, others spoke about Tasmania as a networked place (in fact, often the same people utilized both bounded and networked constructions of Tasmania as a place in the same

interview). Networked views of Tasmania also influenced the migration decisions and experiences of the people I spoke to. It was the recognition of the possibilities for moving and travelling, only possible through the recognition of the existence of networks between Tasmania and the rest of the world, that enabled people to think about migrating in the first place.

The recognition of the existence of networks has also influenced the experiences of people upon returning to the state. For example, for some people, a networked construction of Tasmania has meant that they can see their return to Tasmania not necessarily as a permanent move:

Rosamond: I definitely feel that Tasmania's starting to feel small again ... I definitely have a desire to have something new happening, whether that's a new place or just a new life, I don't know ... it seems to me Tasmania always starts to feel that way after a year ... I definitely want to go away at the end of the year 'though ...

Hazel: Do you reckon that would be like a move or just a holiday, or would it be a wait and see?

Rosamond: It would be a wait and see I think. It depends how things would be for me at the end of the year, whether I was feeling really happy about being in Tassie then or whether I was getting that urge to, you know.⁸¹

For others, the recognition of the existence of networks that include Tasmania enabled them to feel comfortable living in Tasmania, with the knowledge that they need not be isolated and can reach out to the rest of the world easily through telecommunications, short visits or future moves. With respect to future moves, a number of people said that they would base themselves in Tasmania as long as they could travel outside of the state when they wanted to, for work or for pleasure:

⁸¹ Rosamond did move away at the end of the year.

Hazel: In an ideal world, if there were no constraints on you, where would you choose to live and why?

Katherine: You know right now I reckon I'd probably stay put ... Why? Because if there were no financial constraints on me I could go to Melbourne whenever I wanted [laughter]. One thing I should say, one thing that I would find hard about Tassie is if I had no money is the fact I couldn't leave.

Low-cost airlines may be a particularly salient issue with respect to this theme. The existence of cheap airfares over the last few years has meant that travel outside of Tasmania has become much more affordable for many people:

Michael: The thing I like about here now ... is with all the, with Virgin and JetStar and Qantas and so forth [discount airlines], um and if you've got a bit of money ... you don't feel isolated anymore.

These comments highlight the importance of networks in fluid and mobile understandings of migration. As I discussed in Chapter Two, for many people, migration is not perceived as a single move from point A to point B, but rather as part of a more fluid set of mobilities.

On the other hand, networked understandings of Tasmania as a place could also lead to the recognition that the uniqueness of Tasmania could be 'threatened' by the loss of 'boundaries' around Tasmania and the opening up of networks with other places. For example, in a focus group, Marcus discussed the impact of the increasing numbers of people from other parts of the country settling in Tasmania and the impact that this would have upon both the physical and social landscape of Hobart. He said that he saw "money talking" in Tasmania more than it did when he was growing up and that the "recent influx" of people into Hobart has to do not so much

with what is good about Hobart as what's wrong in other Australian cities. He said that the idea that Hobart is pristine is an illusion and that if Hobart does not plan for growth spurred on by people from interstate, the city will have to deal with a number of issues which are already emerging such as traffic congestion, poor design and planning issues.

7.3.3 Summary

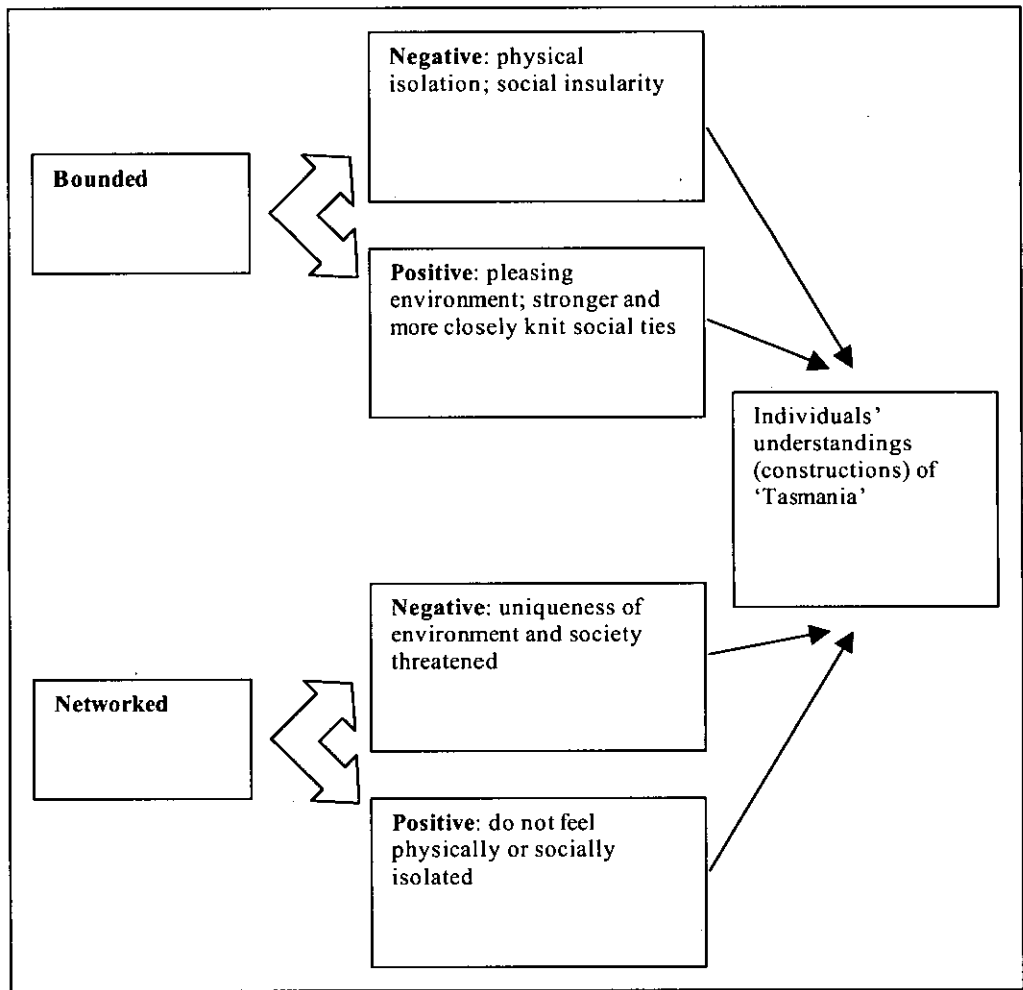
In summary, bounded constructions of Tasmania were prominent among the young people I spoke with, and while Tasmania was often spoken about as 'isolated' or 'insular', people did not speak about "Tasmania" itself as 'networked' or 'inter-connected'. However, these bounded notions of Tasmania were created through acknowledgement of the existence of networks and recognition of the existence of other significant places. Both bounded and networked constructions of Tasmania have had a significant impact upon the actions, experiences and future plans of the people I spoke with. It is important to stress here that bounded and networked constructions of place can exist simultaneously and that one person can draw upon both types of constructions to explain or justify their decisions and their feelings. It is also important to recognize that the relative importance of each type of construction can change over time and that people's constructions can change between their departure and return to Tasmania. This contingent nature of place constructions is evident in the following quote by Michael, who claims that the extent to which the state can be seen as bounded or isolated has changed in recent times:

Michael (focus group): I think it's [Tasmania] now almost gone from being isolated to being comfortably insulated.

Furthermore, both bounded and networked constructions of Tasmania can influence the ways in which both physical and social aspects of this place are perceived. For example, bounded constructions may result in Tasmania being seen as physically isolated, while networked constructions may lessen this feeling, but increase concern

over the loss of uniqueness of the Tasmanian environment. On the other hand, bounded constructions may result in Tasmania being seen as insular, while networked constructions may increase concern over the loss of uniqueness of the Tasmanian society. These arguments are illustrated in Figure 7.1 below.

Figure 7.1: Constructions of Tasmania



7.4 Multiple actors, complicated constructions

While I have concentrated up to this point upon the informants' constructions of Tasmania as a place, it would be remiss to argue that these place constructions exist independently of the constructions of other important actors. Their friends, families and peers influenced their actions and experiences. This was discussed in Chapter Four in terms of the desire to be with friends and family, but also in the context of a 'culture of migration', which is based in part upon particular constructions of Tasmania and particular ideas about the relationship of 'Tasmania' with other places. Having pointed out this connection, I now move on to a discussion of the influence on constructions of Tasmania of another important group of actors – representatives of the State Government of Tasmania. Any construction of Tasmania as a place will be influenced by dominant discourses or dominant constructions of the state and arguably the most dominant actors in creating constructions of Tasmania are actors within the State Government. The State Government of Tasmania is instrumental in processes of place construction, both implicitly and explicitly, in almost all of its functions. In order to narrow the scope of discussion, I will focus on just two areas that are of particular relevance for this research. The first is the construction of Tasmania in the context of discussions on the migration of young adults into and out of the state. The second is through the involvement of the government in marketing 'Tasmania' as a means to encourage investment and economic development into the state.

7.4.1 State Government

As outlined in Chapter One, the State Government in Tasmania has been concerned with the out-migration of young adults for decades. In many cases, this concern has been manifested in comments about the 'loss' of young people from the state. Such comments rely upon bounded constructions of the state, which portray the out-migration of young people from the state as an absolute loss and do not recognize the benefits to be gained either by return migration or by the development of networks

beyond the state's boundaries. For example, Tim described a chance encounter he had with a Tasmanian politician at a work function while living away from the state:

Tim: I can remember I went to a drinks function when I was at [workplace] ... it was whenever Rundle was in office and he was at the drinks function and I went over and said good day to him and he said hello, what are you doing, I'm working in [workplace] and he bagged me out, he said oh, you should be in Hobart and brain drain and why aren't you back there and I said oh, I didn't say much because I didn't want to be rude, I said oh well, I quite like it here and anyway, um, so yeah he had a go at me, so they [Tasmanian politicians] do perceive it as negative.

I have already discussed such bounded notions of the state and the 'problem' of youth migration as perceived by the State Government in more depth in Chapter One. However, it is important to point out that the view of youth migration as a problem is not unique to Tasmania, and it has been criticized in other contexts. For example, Trish spoke to me about a conference she attended on 'intentional communities' in Northern New South Wales:

Trish: It was held at a place called [name of town] and they had a lot of children there, and on the neighboring communities, who were all becoming sixteen, seventeen, eighteen years old, and the conference was around, was called 'handing on the torch' and it was about continuing on the community from the older people handing the torch onto the younger people to keep that dream alive that the parents had, you know, slugged their guts out by working in Sydney to go and buy this land and create this piece of heaven and now the kids are all leaving and it's like, what's going on? And one of the girls ... she was like seventeen at the time, she said 'I think if you're going to measure the success of your community

on whether the children never leave home or not, you've got it wrong' and I think it's the same for Tasmania.

It is crucial to note here, however, that in this context, these bounded notions of Tasmania have been made in reaction to networking processes, most significantly migration. The opinion that young people should stay in a community and that young people who leave are 'lost' can be understood as a reaction to the networked nature of society. Young people migrate, and the reaction of many communities is to cling to bounded notions of place. Massey (1995) argues that the more turbulent and interconnected the world becomes, the more people tend to cling strongly to notions of (bounded) place for a feeling of security and stability.

State Government constructions have serious implications for the decisions and experiences of young migrants. On the one hand, bounded constructions of Tasmania can lead to feelings of entrapment. People may feel that they have limited opportunities and that they therefore need to leave the state in order to develop themselves. On the other hand, if they do leave, the government has implied that they are not supporting the state and that their migrations are actually reinforcing the relative deprivation of the state compared with the rest of the country. Furthermore, as discussed above, insular politics stemming from bounded constructions of Tasmania can have a negative impact upon the experiences of young people upon their return to the state, and may even influence their future migration decisions. The idea that the young people who leave are 'lost' to the state may lead to a lack of recognition of those young people who do return. Furthermore, constructing Tasmania as inferior to other locations in Australia (e.g. because of a weaker economy) leads to return migrants being viewed as 'failures' (see Kate's comments above). It is apparent then, that many of the experiences discussed by the people I spoke with, which stemmed out of bounded constructions of Tasmania, could most certainly have been influenced by the predominantly bounded nature of place constructions by dominant actors within the State Government.

However, the opinion within government circles that young people should stay in a community to keep that community 'alive' and that young people who leave are 'lost' is not (or at least, is no longer) universal amongst all State Government actors. In fact, there has recently been some recognition of the importance of maintaining ties with Tasmanians who have moved away from the state and the possibility of setting up 'expatriate' networks of Tasmanians to help improve the state's development progress (discussed in Chapter One). While this is a recent development, it does indicate that networked constructions of the state do exist within the context of government. However, the potential for returned Tasmanians to contribute to the state's development is seldom recognized, perhaps because the assumption that many people return only because they have 'failed' elsewhere is still seen as valid. Actors within the State Government could still do more to meet the needs of returning Tasmanians and take full advantage of these people's skills and experiences.

7.4.2 Commercial actors

As I discussed in Chapter One, the concern of actors within the State Government with the out-migration of young adults from the state has been largely economic, independent of whether they have taken a bounded or networked approach to constructing Tasmania in relation to this issue. Given this explicit priority, it is appropriate to examine the actual measures taken by the State Government to promote Tasmania as a desirable place to invest.

Both the State Government and commercial actors have a stake in the construction of Tasmania as a place. Harvey (1996) suggests that such speculative place construction has been growing around the world. He explains that since the 1970s, there have been rapid changes in "the relative locations of places within the global patterning of capital accumulation", partly due to the increased speed and decreased costs of transport (ibid:297). Since we feel less secure in our places in this turbulent time, we begin to "worry about the meaning of place in general" (ibid:297) and we become much more aware that we are competing with other places for capital. As a result,

people “try to differentiate their place from other places and become more competitive” (ibid:297).

It is true that we live in “a climate of greater risk, insecurity and market volatility [in which] we can no longer assume job security [and flexible labour markets] create conditions which are not ideal for the promotion of home-ownership” (Forrest 2003:6). However, while these conditions may not be ideal for the promotion of home-ownership, investment in speculative place-construction (the construction of both physical infrastructure and *images* of place) has increased among those individuals and organizations that have become the ‘winners’ in the new global economic order of mobile capital. The ‘image’ of places is becoming ever more important, and we are increasingly moving away from an experience of unselfconscious ‘rootedness’ and towards an image conscious ‘sense of place’. Hence, as a result of the perceived threat to place posed by the volatile processes of globalization, there has been an increasing trend for people to invest more money in place construction.

The image of particular places is important in retaining and attracting both investment and ‘desirable’ people into those places. Government and commercial interest groups have utilized both bounded and networked constructions to promote Tasmania as a place. For example, Tourism Tasmania, an arm of the State Government, draws upon notions of Tasmania as bounded in promoting the state as an ideal holiday destination:

Separated from mainland Australia by the 240km stretch of Bass Strait, Tasmania is a land apart – a place of wild and beautiful landscapes; friendly, welcoming people; a pleasant, temperate climate; wonderful wine and food; a rich history; and a relaxed island lifestyle.

(Tourism Tasmania 2004)

Tourism Tasmania constructs Tasmania as a bounded 'land apart' for the purposes of attracting tourists. As Royle notes, isolation and difference can be seen as a benefit in the tourism industry (2001:45), with islands marketed as places to "get away from it all" (ibid:49). However, it is important to note that they are selling this construction in order to bolster the social, political and economic networks between Tasmania and the rest of the country and the world.

Another example of commercially-focused place construction is the promotion of "island branding" techniques, which enable "a premium mark-up on products identified with the island" (ibid:176). For example, Tourism Tasmania set up an organization⁸² in the state that is concentrating on developing a Tasmanian Brand (Brand Tasmania 2006). The organization constructs Tasmania in the following way:

Tasmania's competitive edge is its ability to produce some of the world's finest foods, superb wines, and premium products from one of the unique natural environments in the world.

(Brand Tasmania 2006)

Again, we can see the utilization of 'uniqueness' to increase the opportunities for networked relations around the world in the form of trade in high quality goods. This body aims to encourage the selling of Tasmanian produce with a premium marked price. This is made possible because of the construction of Tasmania as a place from which fine food originates. It must be stressed that saying that something is socially constructed does not infer that it is not based to some extent on physical realities, that is, food from Tasmania may indeed be of high quality. It is, however, not simply the fine food that is at issue, but also the perceived uniqueness of these foods. This uniqueness is often 'sold' by reference to the bounded and isolated nature of Tasmania.

⁸² Brand Tasmania has since become independent from Tourism Tasmania, although it still includes a number of representatives of the State Government on its board, including representatives from Tourism Tasmania, the Department of Economic Development and the Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment (Brand Tasmania 2006).

7.4.3 Summary

In summary, the young returned Tasmanians I spoke with tended to construct Tasmania as a bounded and isolated place. The State Government's approach to the issue of the migration of young people has tended to draw upon a notion of Tasmania as a bounded place (with some recent exceptions). In addition, organizations charged with promoting aspects of the state's economy have chosen to draw upon bounded notions of the state both to attract tourists and to sell products at a premium mark-up. While all three groups have prioritized bounded (over networked) constructions of Tasmania in their discourses, this has only been possible because of the recognition of the existence of networks. The young returned Tasmanians understood Tasmania to be bounded and isolated *in relation to* other places; actors within the State Government have constructed Tasmania as bounded *in reaction to* the uneven flow of young adults across these networks; and commercial actors such as Tourism Tasmania and Brand Tasmania have constructed a bounded notion of Tasmania because of *a recognition of* the potential profit to be made from trade networks and investment from other places. This means that while bounded constructions of place are dominant among these actors, such bounded constructions are certainly not the only option for place construction in Tasmania and in fact can only be fully understood because of the existence of networks.

The consequences of prioritizing bounded or networked constructions of Tasmania for the actions and experiences of the young Tasmanians I spoke with were significant. Bounded constructions of Tasmania held by some informants encouraged them to move away from the state. Bounded constructions held by informants also led to frustration with the insularity of certain people and organizations in the state on the one hand, and the recognition of the uniqueness of the social and physical environment of Tasmania on the other. The acceptance of the State Government's bounded constructions of Tasmania on the part of my informants led to a desire the move away for economic opportunities (sometimes accompanied by guilt at moving

away from the state) on the one hand, and loyalty to the state on the other. At the same time, networked constructions on the part of my informants enabled both the recognition of opportunities elsewhere and the recognition of the possibility of living in Tasmania and yet maintaining significant networks outside of the state. Networked constructions by the State Government also led to recognition of the economic potential of 'expatriate' Tasmanians.⁸³ On the other hand, networked constructions of place could also lead to concerns about the impact of 'outside' influences on the Tasmanian environment and society and the resulting loss of the distinctiveness of the place.

⁸³ And, theoretically, returned Tasmanians, although such a recognition does not yet seem apparent in any formal sense.

7.5 Conclusion

Place construction, or the way people understand and discuss the nature and meaning of places, can have very real social, political and economic consequences. The ways in which a place is perceived by people influences the way they act in relation to that place. For example, the ways in which Tasmania is understood and constructed by young adults will influence their migration decisions and ultimately the politics and economy of the state. Certainly such place constructions are influenced by material realities, but it is the constructions themselves, in interaction with the material realities, that influence people's actions.

Place construction occurs at all levels from individual constructions to constructions by economic and political interest groups. These place constructions necessarily permeate and influence each other, and as a result these constructions are in constant flux and reflect the power relations evident in society. At the moment, bounded constructions of Tasmania appear to be dominant among the young people I spoke with, in the State Government and among commercial actors. However, bounded constructions only exist in relation to networked constructions. Furthermore, networked constructions appear to be gaining increased prominence, especially within the State Government, which has recently released initiatives to foster ties with Tasmanians interstate and overseas, and campaigns to promote Tasmanian goods and the Tasmanian environment in order to increase exports and tourism.

The relative strength of bounded and networked discourses is important because of the implications of both types of discourse. When bounded notions are prominent, we hear about the physical isolation and social and political insularity of the state on the one hand and the uniqueness of the state's environment and society on the other. Constructions of Tasmania as isolated and insular may make people feel isolated and trapped, and thereby influence people's decisions to leave the state initially. However, if they do leave, they may be seen as letting the state down. In addition, the idea that young people who leave are 'lost' to the state (discussed in Chapter One)

can lead to a lack of recognition of those young people who return. Furthermore, if these bounded constructions of Tasmania are combined with an implicit assumption that Tasmania does not have as many opportunities as the mainland (or overseas), or is somehow 'backwards' in comparison, then return migrants may be seen as 'failures' upon their return. On the other hand, bounded constructions of Tasmania that construct Tasmania as a place with a unique environment and closely knit social networks can encourage people to return to the state and provide an important marketing tool for commercial actors in the state.

When networked notions are prominent, we hear about the loss of the uniqueness of the Tasmanian environment and society on the one hand and the opportunities for people, ideas, goods and money to thrive through connections with other places on the other. Networked constructions of Tasmania point to the possibility of moving away from the state, but can also promote migration into the state through a recognition of the possibility of living comfortably in Tasmania, while still maintaining ties with other parts of the world.

This chapter has discussed the political, economic and social consequences of different forms of place construction for young migrants, the State Government and other economic actors in Tasmania. The next, and concluding chapter, discusses the intricately inter-woven relationships between the concepts of migration, mobility, place, place construction, identity, stability and change, discusses the practical consequences of such an understanding and suggests further directions for future research in this field.

Conclusion

In this thesis, I have provided a critique of traditional methods of studying migration that focus on the questions of who migrates and attempt to answer the question of why people migrate by providing lists of contributing factors (e.g. push-pull studies). I have instead adopted an approach that focuses on the questions of how people negotiate, experience and understand their migrations. In taking this approach, I recognize the turbulence and ambiguity of migration and the importance of both mobility and place. This concluding chapter brings together my main arguments in the light of empirical data, discusses the insights derived from the theoretical framework and shows how the case study of thirty young returnee Tasmanians advances our understanding of the processes of both migration and place construction. Some policy implications of the research are then provided, followed by suggestions on the type of research agenda suggested by the results of this research for the field of migration studies.

Theoretical approach

Throughout this thesis, I have taken the position that migrants are not simply rational actors changing locations in relation to various economic indices, rather they are emotional people whose movements between places are based upon their own understandings of a situation. This approach can be divided into two main propositions for ease of explanation.

First, it involves considering migrants to be people with complex experiences, emotions and understandings about their lives, which impact upon the decisions that they make, rather than rational actors who make fully informed decisions. That is, people act on their perceptions of a situation. Second, it requires that we view migration as movement between places imbued with meaning, which are experienced and 'lived in' on a day-to-day basis, rather than as movement between locations

defined only by certain attributes that can be listed and then ticked off, such as population size and structure, economic structure, natural resources and social services. A study of *return* migration in this context is particularly interesting because it enables an examination both of people's experiences of migration throughout the migration process and of the changes in people's perceptions of place as a result of their migrations.

My focus on migrants as feeling people moving between places shaped the major research questions, and thus impacted upon the choice of methodologies and methods (Chapter Three). The major research questions asked in this study were:

1. How do young Tasmanians negotiate their migrations?
2. How do they experience their migrations?
3. How do they understand their migrations?⁸⁴

In addressing the first question, I drew upon Bourdieu's concept of habitus as a bridge between explanations of migration that focus on structural factors and those that focus on the agency of individuals. However, I argued that while Bourdieu's theories are useful for this research, his own work using this framework tends to prioritize structural explanations. I thus looked towards phenomenology as an aid in addressing the question of how young Tasmanians experience their migrations. However, I wanted to move beyond a purely phenomenological study of migration experiences and consider how people understood and negotiated their migrations. For this task I drew upon symbolic interactionism and hermeneutics. Furthermore, I drew upon the work of social researchers who consider migration to be a complex and turbulent process (e.g. Papastergiadis 2002) and provide suggestions of how to study societies in flux (e.g. Barth 1989, Friedman 1992 and Hannerz 1992).

⁸⁴ I have argued that satisfactory answers to the question of *why* young Tasmanians migrate must be informed by these three major questions.

To get some sense of the complexity of migration decisions, experiences and understandings, I chose to carry out in-depth interviews. These interviews were subsequently analyzed using a grounded theory approach that enabled the complexity of the interviews to be maintained, and yet organized at the same time. A number of other methods were used to provide context and support for these interviews, including group discussions with returned migrants and participant-observation.

Findings

Migration is not simply about moving from point A to point B, but is about the process of movement itself. It is about the ways in which people negotiate those movements, the ways people experience those movements and the ways in which they make sense of their experiences (the ways they understand those movements). In examining the movements of the young Tasmanians I spoke to, I therefore asked them about their negotiations, experiences and understandings of moving. I coded the interview transcripts using a grounded theory approach through which six major themes emerged⁸⁵:

1. Practical considerations
2. Personal ties
3. Experiences of leaving and returning
4. The future
5. Flexible identity
6. Sense of place

The first and second themes inform the question of how people negotiate migration. People took both practical considerations and personal ties into account when deciding whether, and where, to move. I also found that people's negotiations of housing, health education and employment, as well as their negotiations of personal ties, greatly influenced people's experiences and understandings of migration.

⁸⁵ These six themes were subsequently 'fine-tuned' as a result of the focus groups.

The third and fourth themes inform the question of how people experience migration. I found that experiences of migration were influenced in large part by people's narratives of their reasons for migrating. Experiences of migration were also influenced by the extent to which people felt they had control over decisions to migrate. The actual experiences of migration varied between people and over the course of a person's life, and for many people the migration experience was ambivalent. People's ideas about migrating in the future were informed by their past experiences of migration, but were also contingent on a number of practical considerations such as personal ties and opportunities for employment and education. People's plans for the future also provided some insight into their understandings of migration.

The fifth and sixth themes inform the question of how people understand migration. People's understandings of migration were influenced by their concern with flexibility. Many people spoke about the need to be flexible in terms of the places in which they lived. Flexibility was seen as necessary in order to find employment, enable a greater degree of choice in people's lives and further the development of one's identity. I discussed this idea of flexible identity in the context of Giddens' (1991) and Bauman's (1997, 2001) discussions on the rise of reflexive individualism, finding that contrary to the arguments of both Giddens and Bauman, many of these young Tasmanians understood their identities to be influenced by both mobility and place simultaneously. People's understandings of migration were greatly influenced by their ideas about the places they were moving between and could be influenced by other actors' constructions of place. I concentrated particularly upon constructions of Tasmania as a place and found that people's ideas about Tasmania as a place affected their understandings of migration. In particular, bounded and networked constructions of Tasmania as a place had different implications for people's understandings of their migrations to and from the state.

Theoretical implications

The experience of mobility is an important part of people's lives that influences both the practical considerations and identities of the people who are moving, and also has a significant impact on the people around them and the places they are migrating to and from. The bulk of migration research to date has considered migration to be manifested as discrete events, rather than constructing mobility as a fundamental social issue. However, recent work in the field of migration that has drawn upon post-colonial and feminist epistemologies has begun to recognize that in addition to simply asking why people migrate, it is also important to ask how people experience, understand and negotiate migration. I place myself among these more recent migration scholars, focusing upon the ambivalence of migration experiences and the complexity of negotiations and understandings of migration.

Throughout this thesis, I have joined Urry (2000) in arguing that mobility is a fundamental aspect of social life. I have further argued that place is also a fundamental aspect of social life. While migration studies are paying increasing attention to the concept of mobility, the longer-term 'journeying' aspects of migration, and the mobile nature of social life more generally, I contend that the concept of place also has great potential to progress the theoretical developments occurring within migration studies, and in fact in all studies of social life.

Indeed, in this study, the ways in which people justified their decisions to move, experienced their moves and came to understand their moves had a lot to do with their understandings and constructions of the places they were moving between. People's constructions of places were shown to influence their experiences and understandings of migration, as well as their own identities (Chapters Five, Six and Seven).

The concepts of place and mobility are intricately related. Mobility presupposes movement between places understood to be nodes in networks of social, material and animal relations. Similarly, in many cases, places are defined in terms of the creation

of borders of some kind, separating a place conceptually from the endless flows of people, ideas and material objects, that is, separating place from mobility and mobile processes. Another conceptual distinction closely related to that of place-mobility is that of stability-change. The relationship between stability and change is a particularly important aspect of people's identities and so is the relationship between mobility and place. However, it is important not to equate the two dichotomies. Place should not be simply equated with stability and mobility should not be simply equated with change. Places, understood as nodes in networks of relations, are not stable in the sense of being static, they are constantly re-negotiated, and understood in new ways by multiple different people, and by the same people at different times. Similarly, while the concept of mobility normally implies change in some sense (at least in the sense of a change in location), this change need not necessarily be seen as an unusual event. In some cases, mobility can become normalized and expected, as is the case for nomadic cultures, and as was the case to some extent for those young Tasmanians who saw leaving the state (mobility) as a normal state of affairs.

Policy implications

This research developed in part out of my interest in the public discussion in Tasmanian government and media circles surrounding the 'problem' of young people leaving the state. It is important, therefore, to comment on the potential implications of this research for future policy development in Tasmania.

I have argued that the processes of both mobility and place-attachment have significant impacts upon the practical considerations and actions of migrants, and thereby on the politics and economies of places. As outlined in Chapter One, in the case of Tasmania, migration affects the population size and structure of a place, and such changes are related to issues such as population decline, ageing and 'brain drain', which are of great interest to social planners and policy makers. Further, as discussed in Chapters Five and Seven, emotional attachments to particular places, in particular the ways in which places are felt, perceived, understood and portrayed, can

have very real impacts on the economies and political organizations of those places. People's senses of place influence their experiences and identities, which impact upon their actions, and in turn influence the politics and economies of places. With these connections between migration, place attachment, politics and economy in mind, I will now discuss the implications of my research for the management of political-economic issues in the context of Tasmania and make three major policy recommendations.

First, if policy-makers decide to take action to try to alter the migration patterns of young Tasmanians, they will need approaches for dealing with questions such as:

- Why do people move away from, or into, the state?
- What might encourage more young people to move to the state?
- How might the State Government target those young people it wants to return to the state?
- What are the complexities involved in making residential decisions?

These questions cannot be satisfactorily answered by economic approaches that consider migrants only in terms of their value as workers and consumers. A more nuanced approach is required. Clues to answering these questions can be found both in the ways in which young people understand and negotiate their migration decisions and experiences and in the ways young people think about and discursively construct Tasmania as a place. Further clues may be found in the relationship between these young people's understandings and constructions and the constructions of others, including friends, colleagues, family, employers, and actors within the media and the State Government.

Second, if policy-makers wish to understand (and perhaps influence) the migrations of young adults to and from Tasmania, it is important that they recognize the significance that the discourses of young people have for their actions. In this thesis, I

have discussed two important types of discourses that are relevant in this respect. First, the ways in which people understand the impact of migration upon their own identities, reflected in the ways in which they speak about identity development in the context of experiences of mobility, provide important clues to understanding their actions. Second, the ways in which people understand the nature of places, reflected in the ways in which they speak about places, are also crucial in influencing their actions. As I noted in Chapter Five, conceptualizations about the nature of particular places and 'how things are' also influence ideas about 'how things should be done'. That is, place constructions influence the culture of government departments, private industry and educational institutions as well as the approach of individuals towards their own working and personal lives. For example, conceptualisations of Tasmania as a bounded and insular place have reinforced (and have simultaneously been reinforced by) an employment culture in which social networks dominate and people 'outside' these networks find it difficult to find appropriate employment.

Third, while people's constructions of place are certainly influenced by material realities, it is the constructions themselves on which people base their decisions and actions, rather than any 'pure' reality. To assume that migrants are simply rational actors who have access to all relevant information and make fully informed and calculated decisions is to dangerously simplify the issue. People seldom have access to all relevant information, and the information they do have access to is always necessarily interpreted and reconstructed. Thus, in trying to understand migration decisions, we also need to consider the constructions of discourses about migration, which are mediated by (and in turn mediate) the experiences of migrants. It is a messy proposition, but to make policies based on the assumption that migrants are rational, fully-informed and unemotional is to neglect the real complexity of the situation and to deny these young Tasmanians their own discourses, and hence their own validations of their experiences.

In summary, if policy-makers do wish to attempt to influence the migrations of 18 to 38 year olds adults to and/or from the state, they need to recognize the material

realities that may influence their migrations, such as employment, career development, housing costs and lifestyle. This is certainly the case since such material realities can influence people's constructions of the state and their experiences of migration and thus their migration decisions. However, the negotiated aspect of migration decisions also needs to be recognized. Negotiations are influenced in great part by their constructions of Tasmania as a place, including the existence of both bounded and networked constructions of Tasmania, the interdependence of these constructions, the fact that people can prioritize one type of construction over another and the positive and negative implications of such prioritizing. The role of other stakeholders, such as actors with commercial interests, in influencing these constructions and the inter-dependence of all of these constructions of Tasmania is also very important.

The implications of such an approach are far-reaching. If an approach that is sensitive to migration experiences and the ways in which people understand and negotiate their migrations is taken, the issues facing young people in Tasmania can be better understood and the concerns of young people can then be properly addressed. This in turn is likely to affect the ways in which people think about and construct Tasmania as a place and, hence, influence their future residential decisions. An approach that is sensitive to the experiences and understandings of young people is likely to encourage more young people to move to Tasmania.

Future research

Finally, by raising these issues for migration research, the thesis points to a number of matters that require further empirical and analytical investigation. First, given the contingent and positional nature of migration experiences and the related issues of identity construction and place construction, it is important to carry out further investigations in different contexts. For example, conducting similar research projects with people in other parts of the world may be particularly enlightening given that people in different areas experiencing different conditions may be more likely to

adhere to particular narratives. For example, is the 'culture of migration' apparent among many of my informants universal around the world? Comparative studies may also be informative in this respect. Longitudinal studies, which follow people's narratives of their experiences of migration from the time before their first move until their return, could also be particularly interesting. Such studies could involve a number of consecutive interviews with the same people, before they left, after they arrived in their new location, before and after subsequent moves and before and after their return moves and this would provide important insights into the ways in which people's migration narratives can change over time in different contexts.

In addition to research into migration experiences in different (place and time) contexts, it may also be useful to conduct further research into the nature of place attachment and the impacts of place attachment upon the identities of people and the political economies of places. Such research could take place in numerous contexts around the world. The following questions related to Tasmania provide an example of some of the questions that may be addressed:

- What do residents of Tasmania consider important?
- How may this differ between different residents?
- What exactly is being done to market the 'place' Tasmania and by whom? What are the economic, social and political implications?

While I touched upon these questions in the thesis, much more work could be undertaken in this field.

Related to research into both migration and place attachment is the question of why people do *not* migrate. As Clifford (1997:5) has noted, "when travel ... becomes a kind of norm, dwelling demands explication. Why ... do people stay at home?" To what extent is non-mobility a result of limitations, or a form of resistance? It would be interesting to discover the limitations of young people in Tasmania who want to

move, but who are unable to do so and it would be equally interesting to explore the reasons why young middle-class people who may have been exposed to a 'culture of migration' and have the resources to move choose not to do so. Similar research into non-migration would be interesting in any part of the world.

Further research could also be undertaken to improve the reliability and availability of statistics measuring the incidence of *internal* return migration. Any such statistical study of internal migration in Australia would have to include a data collection method of some kind, as reliable statistics are not otherwise available. Such a project would be logistically very difficult and time-consuming and data collection would have to be undertaken over a period of time to allow for seasonal variations (e.g. the movements of university students and seasonal workers). However, if such information could be collected, it would be invaluable to migration researchers in the country, as well as to state governments interested in detailed data regarding population movements.

The arguments made in this thesis also have far-reaching implications for possible future studies in migration. I have proposed a model for future research in migration studies; a model which recognizes that mobility is an important aspect of people's lives, which is tied to both the identities and the political economies of the people who are moving and also has a significant impact on the people around them and the places they are migrating between. Such an approach is already beginning to be embraced by a new generation of migration researchers who are drawing from post-colonial and feminist epistemologies. However, I have also argued for recognition of the potential contribution of the concept of place to migration studies. In our excitement about the possibilities afforded to us by the concept of mobility, it is important that we do not lose sight of the equally important, but comparatively neglected, concept of place in our studies of migration. I have pointed to the utility of the concept of 'place', understood as a node in social, material and animal networks, for migration research. On the one hand, recognition that places are not simply locations filled with various opportunities and resources allows us to examine the

processes of place-attachment, which is so important in studies of migration experience. On the other hand, a recognition of the importance of place also guards against relativistic studies of mobility, which can lose sight of the fact that we are not disembodied egos floating in space and which tend to neglect the place-specific factors that can influence migration experiences, such as local economies, politics, social norms and natural and built environments and their related power-relations. In conclusion, future studies concerned with people's negotiations, experiences and understandings of migration need to recognize the complex interrelationships between the concepts of mobility and place.

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Appendix 1: Definition of terms

Term	Definition	Comments
Dasein	Heidegger's (1973) term to describe the state of being. Being is 'being-in-the-world'. We exist only through our relationships to the world.	Provides an alternative view to Cartesian dualism.
Habitus	"Embodied rituals of everydayness by which a given culture produces and sustains belief in its own obviousness" (Butler 1997:152). Our habitus, which is learned and imprinted in our bodies, subconsciously informs us of the most appropriate way to act.	Following Bourdieu (1984:101), any action that I take (my practice) is determined by my habitus, my material, cultural and symbolic capital, and the context (the field) in which I am taking that action.
Home	A particularly significant type of place.	Emotions tied to home places can be both positive and negative and are often ambivalent.
Identity	Used in the sense of self-identity. The way in which people think about and portray themselves to themselves and to others.	Identity is understood to be strategic, positional and context-reliant.
Migration	The physical movement of people from one place to another.	Migration is an important aspect of mobility.
Mobility	The movement of people, objects, images and ideas within and between societies.	Mobility is a broader term than migration.
Place	Nodes, or central significant points, in networks of social, material and animal relations.	Place is not the same as space (see below).
Place construction	The ways in which people reflect upon, and talk about, particular places.	This concept is closely tied to sense of place.
Sense of place	The affective bond people have to a place. This bond is often personal, but is also influenced by social, cultural and economic circumstances. The bonds people have to a place can lead to changes the nature of that place.	The concept of sense of place implies that there is some conceptual distance between oneself and a place that enables reflection upon the nature of the place.
Space	"That most encompassing reality that allows for things to be located within it" (Casey 2001:404).	While places are situated in space, they have no privileged relationship to space because everything is situated in space. In this sense, the concept of space is more similar to the concept of time, than to the concept of place.

Appendix 2: Interview outline

SECTION A: Personal details

1. Name

2. Age

3. Sex

4. Early childhood

4.1 Where were you born?

4.2 If not Tasmania, when did you first come to Tasmania?

5. Current location

5.1 Where are you currently living (suburb)?

5.2 Who do you currently live with?

5.3 Are you living in a house or an apartment?

5.4 Do you rent or own your property?

5.5 Do you like where you're living now?

Yes – why?

No – why not?

6. Current occupation(s)

6.1 What is your current occupation(s)?

6.2 Where do you work/study/volunteer etc?

7. Education / training

7.1 What is your highest level of educational attainment or training qualification?
(e.g. grade 12, bachelor degree, postgraduate, TAFE certificate, diploma.)

SECTION B: Migration history

8. Migration history since 16

8.1 Where have you lived before for one year or more?

8.2 How long did you live in each place?

8.3 Why did you move there? Why did you leave previous place? Why did you move to that place? Was the choice yours or made by someone else?

9. First departure from Tasmania

9.1 When was the first time you left Tasmania for a year or more?

9.2 Where did you move to?

9.3 Why did you leave?

- a) What conditions in Tasmania encouraged you to leave?
- b) What conditions in [area of destination] encouraged you to move there?
- c) Did you go on your own, or with someone else? If with someone else – who?
- d) Was it your choice to leave? Did anyone else influence your choice?
- e) Did you have any family members or close friends living in [place of destination] before you moved there?

- f) Did you have many family members or close friends living in Tasmania before you left?
- g) What information did you have about [place of destination] before you went? Where did you get that information?

9.4 Occupations

- a) What was your occupation in Tasmania before you left? Did you like it? Why / why not?
- b) What was your occupation(s) in [place of destination]? Did you like it? Why / why not?

9.5 Intentions

- a) How long did you intend to leave for?
- b) How long were you actually away for?

9.6 Did you try to maintain some connections with Tasmanian after you left? (E.g. with family, friends, formally organized social groups, news.)

- Yes – Did you find it hard, or relatively easy, to maintain these connections?
- No – Why not? Did you find it hard, or relatively easy, to cut your ties with Tasmania?

10. First return to Tasmania

10.1 When did you arrive in Tasmania?

10.2 Where were you living before and for how long?

10.3 Where were you living in Tasmania (which town, region)?

10.4 Where are you living now? Which town / region?

10.5 What kind of housing were you living in? Did you like it?

10.6 Did you have as many family members and close friends living in Tasmania when you returned as when you left?

10.7 Why did you return?

- a) Why did you leave [previous place of residence]?
- b) Why did you come to Tasmania?
- c) What information did you have about the situation in Tasmania before you returned (e.g. availability of jobs, housing)? Where did you get that information?
- d) Did you travel with someone else? If yes, with who?

10.8 Was it your choice to return?

10.9 Did anyone influence (or make) the choice to return (e.g. family members, friends)?

Yes – Who? In what way did they influence the choice?

No – *Go to question 10.10*

10.10 Occupation

- a) What was your occupation in [place of departure]? Did you like it? Why / why not?
- b) What was your occupation when you returned to Tasmania? Did you like it? Why / why not?

11. Most recent departure from Tasmania (if not the first)

11.1 When was the last time you left Tasmania for a year or more?

Repeat the questions in section 9.

12. Most recent return to Tasmania (if not the first)

Repeat the questions in section 10.

SECTION C: Experiences of migration

13. Experiences of migration:

13.1 How did you feel to be leaving Tasmania the first time?

13.2 How did you feel when you arrived in [destination]?

- a) At first?
- b) After a few weeks?
- c) After a year?

13.3 What was your family and close friends' reactions to you leaving?

13.4 *If they have left more than once:* Did you feel the same way each time you left?
If not, how did you feel the other time(s)

13.5 How did you feel to be leaving [previous place of residence]?

13.6 How did you feel when you arrived back in Tasmania?

13.7 What were the reactions of your family and close friends when you came back?

13.8 Was Tasmania the way you expected it to be when you came back? How did you expect it to be? How did you find it?

13.9 Change

- a) What has changed since you lived in Tasmania last?

b) Do you think this change [ask for each] is a change for the good or for the bad (or don't you mind either way)?

13.10 How do you feel about your choice to return now? Do you think it was a good decision or do you wish it had worked out another way? Why is that?

13.11 *If they have returned more than once:* Did you feel the same way each time you returned? If not, how did you feel the other time(s)?

13.12 Have any of your family members or close friends left and/or returned? How did you feel about them leaving (and/or returning)?

SECTION D: Negotiating migration

14. Dealing with problems / obstacles

14.1 Apart from the issues we've already discussed, did you face any other obstacles or problems in moving back to the state?

14.2 How did you deal with these problems?

15. Negotiating opportunities

15.1 In moving back to the state, were you faced with any good opportunities?

Yes – What were they?

No – Why do you think that was?

15.2 *If yes to 15.1:* How did you act with regards to those opportunities? Did you take them up? Did you choose not to take them? Why?

SECTION E: Future migrations

16. Plans for future moves

16.1 Staying

- a) How long do you think you'll stay in Tasmanian this time?
- b) Why do you expect to stay for that long?

16.2 *If they plan to leave at any stage:*

- a) Where do you think you will move to next?
- b) Why do you expect to move there?
- c) How long do you think you will stay in [place of destination] after you move there?
- d) Why do you expect to stay that long?

SECTION F: Ideas of home

17. Ideas of 'home'

17.1 *If they mentioned home during the interview:*

- a) You mentioned being/feeling at home. What does this concept of 'home' mean to you?
- b) When you left Tasmania (for the first time) did you feel like you were leaving home?
- c) Did you think you were going to set up a new home in [place of destination]?
- d) (*If they left more than once*): Did you feel like you were leaving home the second (third, etc) time you left Tasmania?
- e) Have you felt 'at home' since you moved back to Tasmania? Did you expect to?
- f) Did you feel at home in [place of previous residence] when you lived there?
- g) Have you ever felt at home anywhere else? If yes: where and why?

17.2 *If they didn't mention 'home' during the interview:*

- a) When you left Tasmania (for the first time) did you feel like you were leaving home?
- b) Did you think you were going to set up a new home in [place of destination]?
- c) (*If they left more than once*) Did you feel like you were leaving home the second (third, etc) time you left Tasmania?
- d) Have you felt at home since you moved back to Tasmania? Did you expect to?
- e) Did you feel at home in [place of previous residence] when you lived there?
- f) Have you ever felt at home anywhere else? If yes: where and why?
- g) What does this concept of 'home' mean to you?

SECTION G: Their ideas on the issue

18. What do you think?

18.1 Why do you think that so many young adults are migrating away from Tasmania?

18.2 Do you see this migration as a problem?

Yes – Why?

No – Why not?

18.3 Some [other] people see it as a problem (newspaper journalists, politicians). Do you think - given the desire of some people to reduce the numbers of young people leaving – that anything can be done to reduce this flow?

Yes – What can be done?

No – Why can't anything be done?

SECTION H: In an ideal world...

19. If there were no constraints on you:

- a) Where would you choose to live?
- b) Why would you live there?

Appendix 3: Focus group presentation

These themes and quotations from interviews make up the content of the PowerPoint slides that were used as starting points for the focus group discussions.

Seven major themes

Culture of migration⁸⁶

Sense of place

Housing, health, education & employment⁸⁷

Experiences of leaving

Experiences of returning

Personal ties

The future

Culture of migration

It's normal or expected to leave.

Beth: you do kind of expect people to leave.

Kate: we were all going, like hardly any of us were staying, so, it was kind of the done thing.

Emily: You know, turtles pop out of the sand, run to the water, go for it, you know, head out to deep sea. And it felt very much partly that, I just had to go, had to get out of town.

Elizabeth: Why do people leave? I think its kind of expected that you need to go away to gain that experience.

⁸⁶ As a result of the focus groups, this theme was replaced with 'flexible identity'.

⁸⁷ This theme was later called 'practical considerations'.

Sense of place

Attributes of Tasmania: isolated, insular, comfortable lifestyle, attractive environment.

Sophia: I think you feel isolated stuck on an island away from anywhere.

James: I found a lot of my old friends really annoying, um, and sort of narrow-minded.

Michael: we are isolated which is part of what makes it good ... that makes it a bit special and a bit different, but ... we can get out if we want to, OK, that's why I like living here because some of the things that I might have perceived as being problems before just aren't now.

Luke: Some of the special things we have in Tassie ... in terms of the natural beauty and in terms of the lifestyle.

Sense of place (cont.)

Renewed appreciation for attributes of Tasmania upon return.

Ben: I certainly appreciate Tassie a lot more after moving, moving elsewhere.

Heather: You don't appreciate what you've got until you go away and find out. Being at home in Tasmania and elsewhere.

Housing, health, education, employment

Housing - living with parents upon return; buying / building a house.

Health - depression, isolation, stress.

Ben: I felt very lonely when I was in --- as well and that was a big motivator for coming back to Tassie.

Hazel: Was Tasmania the way you expected it to be when you came back? *Kate:* No, not at all. Um, probably, well not probably, well the most depressing time of my life.

Education - before moving, while away, upon return.

Employment - availability of work, satisfaction with job, career paths.

Experiences of leaving

Varied experiences.

Reasons for leaving - the 'official' reasons and a more complex collection of reasons.

Beth: From the surface it appears employment, but there were lots of different reasons ... as to why I moved.

Hazel: Why did you make that move? *Tim:* Ah, I don't know, rationally. You know how there's real reasons and rational reasons?

Experiences of returning

Varied experiences.

Reasons for returning - a common reason: it was an easier or default option at first, followed subsequently by decisions to leave again, or stay (or still undecided).

Hazel: So when you came back, why did you come back to [home town] as opposed to anywhere else? *Matthew:* Um, well partly because I wanted to see my family again I guess and partly because that was just the easiest thing to do, I could come back and stay with Mum and Dad and not have to fork out money for anything or look for a house".

Experiences of returning (cont.)

Other people not interested in experiences.

Susanne: That was a really big thing for me, was not being able to share with people ... not feeling like anyone was interested in the experience.

Trade-off between lifestyle and career.

Jenny: I guess as far as career goes I'm not entirely sure I'm going to stay here because of it, um, but I'd like to but of course the lifestyle's the real reason that I love Tassie.

Personal ties

Importance of personal ties in decisions to leave and return and the timing of those moves.

Anna: I think that was a big thing, that they really need family, the kids need family more than me ... and we had a big family down here.

Ellie: What was it Tassie that encouraged me to leave? Um, my boyfriend wasn't here. I moved to --- for a boy.

The future

Flexibility with regards to future moves.

Anna: I'm pretty happy here and if I'm not I'll just go somewhere else.

Katherine: We've always had a sense of leaving an open door in terms of place.

No plans for future moves.

Jenny: I think I want to stay in Tassie.

Anna: I don't know if I want to be here for the rest of my life and retire here, but I mean our long term plan is to live here because we don't want to uproot the kids again.

In an ideal world ...